

TINSELTOWN SEX SIRENS

MARILYN Monroe, Rita Hayworth, Merle Oberon, Greta Garbo, Elizabeth Taylor, Marlene Dietrich, Theda Bara and Clara Bow — the list goes on and on.

These are the female idols who dominated the silver screen from the time the first directors yelled "action" back in the orange groves of California in 1911 and transformed a sober, alcohol-free town into the myth, legend, magic and dream that became Hollywood.

Hollywood celebrates its 100th birthday this year, being founded in 1887 by prohibitionist Harvey Wilcox who never dreamed that in 1911 the sleepy, church-going town in the California sunshine would become the most famous 48ha in the world, studded with stars, glamor, scandal, legend and lunacy.

Hollywood's influence through the new flickers, the flickering pictures that became moving pictures and finally movies as we know them, has never been greater than through its female stars. They were breathtaking idols who dominated the large silver screens and had men fantasising, women rushing to emulate everything from their hairstyles and make-up to their clothes, and every little girl from every tiny town dreaming of making it in Hollywood as a love goddess.

Mary Pickford, cute, girlish and blonde, along with Lillian Gish who starred in the first major motion picture, D.W. Griffiths' *Birth of a Nation*, set the pace. They were followed by Clara Bow, the original it girl whose brand of smoulder and sexuality in the 1920s had the jazz age using her as their first pin-up.

Seducing maidens

Then came the sizzling Theda Bara, the vamp, whom movie audiences discovered, to their delight, had a name that was an anagram of arab death — appropriate to a time when the sheik Rudolf Valentino was seducing maidens in the desert and Bara was seducing young men in her boudoir.

The fact that Theda Bara's real name was Theodisia Goodman did not deter the vamp's fans.

After Theda Bara came actresses like Gloria Swanson,

the first real grande dame of moviedom who had a special bungalow built for her on the studio set at Paramount by her lover, Joseph Kennedy — President Jack Kennedy's father. Gloria, who eventually married into British aristocracy, was not only queen of films but lived like a queen off screen in the tax-free early Hollywood days, walking her pet cheetahs on the streets of Hollywood.

Marion Davies was another who had quite a successful film career as a blonde childlike beauty and who at 23 captured the heart and the millions of newspaper magnate Randolph Hearst, who was 56 when he fell in love.

Hearst bought a studio for Marion, luxury beach houses, and made her his hostess at the fabled San Simeon Castle, north of California, where the rich, famous and star-studded partied at weekends among the lavish grounds with their zebras, camels, lions and tigers.

Greta Garbo arrived in Hollywood in the 1920s, a Swedish

● MOVIES have been part of our culture since the first director shouted 'action' back in the early part of the century. The first blockbuster of the silent movie era was D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*.

● The first 'talkie' was *The Jazz Singer* in 1927 and the first animated film, starring a mouse, was made by Walt Disney. Hollywood has come a long way since then but it hasn't lost any of the glamor, as JENNY CULLEN reports.

HOLLYWOOD The first 100 years

beauty who was overweight and for whom few saw a career. But Garbo on celluloid became the most powerful, sensuous, beauty of all time.

"Her alluring mouth and volcanic slumberous eyes enfire men to such passion that friendships collapse," wrote an enraptured New York Mirror critic.

Transition to talkies

In 1930 Garbo made the transition to talkies, her first words being "Gif me a viskey, ginger ale on the side — and don't be stingy, baby" and the film *Anna Christie* was billed "Garbo talks". Garbo retired from films after 10 silent movies and 14 talkies and no, she never said "I want to be alone", although she has lived that way. Now in her 80s and living in New York, Garbo still refuses to utter to any other than her closest small circle of friends.



Marilyn Monroe: silver screen sex siren.

HERE'S a chance to win one of 20 double passes to see Harrison Ford's new movie *Mosquito Coast*, rated PG. The passes come with the compliments of Hoyts Cinemas, Brisbane, and are for the *Daily Sun* and 4BK preview night on February 23.

The movie passes are being given away in conjunction with the *Daily Sun*'s special "100 years of Hollywood" feature. Make sure you get tomorrow's *Daily Sun* for your chance to win a set of silver screen video classics. See Page 13 to win a *Mosquito Coast* movie pass.

New breed fascinated the film fans

IN the 1930s a new breed of stars hit Hollywood — Katherine Hepburn, Marlene Dietrich, Carole Lombard, Jean Harlow and Mae West.

Marlene Dietrich, who had made her name in the German film *The Blue Angel*, crooning *Falling in Love Again*, had her back molars removed to give her those famous cheekbones and set a fashion when she appeared in slacks in 1930.

Hepburn also emulated the androgynous appeal of Dietrich in mannish suits and trousers which matched with her classy angular face.

Carole Lombard was the first of the beautiful, blonde, sophisticated comedians and stole the heart of Hollywood's favorite hunk, Clark Gable. Jean Harlow, witty, earthy, funny and gutsy, was another idol of the time and the first

platinum blonde who started a craze for blonde hair that remains part of Hollywood today.

Lombard and Harlow died young — one in an air crash, one of peritonitis. It added to their legends and became part of Hollywood's fascination with the beautiful who never made old age.

Of all the 1930s stars, Mae West, who arrived in Hollywood at 40 from the vaudeville stages of the east, was one of a kind. Earthy, bawdy, and brazen, she minced, wiggled, and was the master of the double entendre, proving with those sideways glances and phrases like "Is that a gun in your pocket or are you just glad to see me," that women could not only be sensuous but could

enjoy sex and make fun of it.

When World War II came to Hollywood, the pin up girl and the love goddess were born. Betty Grable was wartime's number one pin up girl and her legs were insured for millions.

But it was the love goddess who dominated, first Rita Hayworth who sent temperatures rising as she sinuously danced *Put the Blame on Mame* in *Gilda*. Her strapless dress, which looked as if it would fall at any moment, was built with a hidden harness of darts, bones, and grosgrain to ensure that didn't happen.

Rita Hayworth with her red hair, smouldering appeal and beauty — bought at a cost, a painful series of electrolysis to lift her low hairline and red color to change her black tresses — became the ultimate in movie idols when she became Princess Rita, wife of the fabulously wealthy and sexy Aly Khan.

Marilyn Monroe was the next love goddess, emerging in the late 1940s and dominating the 1950s with her whispering voice, famous wiggle, platinum hair and combination of innocence and sexuality.

Marilyn was a fragile goddess, however, who after announcing that Hollywood bought a kiss for \$500 and your soul for five cents, killed herself in 1962 causing controversy and speculation... did she really kill herself, was she murdered? Her death uncovered her affairs with President Jack Kennedy and his brother Bobby.

Celluloid's queen was child star

ELIZABETH Taylor, frequently dubbed the last of the grand queens of celluloid, first appeared as a child star in *National Velvet* after a casting director had decided as a child actress she was no good.

"The kid has nothing, her eyes are too old," he said. But she went on to become the love goddess of three decades and now, at 53, Elizabeth is still undisputed queen of filmdom. Her marriages have enthralled and titillated — all seven of them to Nicky Hilton, Michael Wilding, Eddie Fisher, Richard Burton (twice) and John Warner — as has her penchant for diamonds, including the fabled 33.19-carat Krupp diamond, and her illnesses which have

had her near death several times.

Hollywood's female stars have created scandals (Lana Turner's love affair with gangster Johnny Stompano who was knifed by Lana's 14-year-old daughter), added to the mystique (Grace Kelly became Princess Grace of Monaco), given up all for love (Ingrid Bergman who was shunned by Hollywood when she left her husband to live in sin with Roberto Rossellini) and continued working into their 80s (Lillian Gish, who starred in *Birth of a Nation* in 1912 worked in 1986 with Alan Alda in *Sweet Liberty*).

No look at Hollywood's female screen idols would be complete without a mention of Shirley Temple who was the box office winner of the 1930s, a child star whose dimples, curls and songs like *Animal Crackers* enchanted millions.

Tomorrow: Walt Disney and the advent of color